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Samuel A. Moffett
Pyongyang, Korea.

July 14 1904.

Hon. H. N. Allen.
U. S. Legation, Seoul.
Dear Dr. Allen,

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Dr. Brown
Allen

I want to thank you for your attention to my telegram concerning the arrest of men for selling land to Americans and for the release of the men and also to write you more fully with reference to the situation here as regards the attitude of Korean Officials towards property questions and the rights of foreigners. With the advent of many Japanese, the coming of the railroad, the confiscation of land and houses for the railroad, the wholesale purchase of land and houses by Japanese merchants and others, the injustice of the Korean Magistrate, his apparent alliance with the Japanese to force Koreans to sell at great loss, the indefiniteness of Korean deeds, the lack of a system for recording deeds, the high handed measures of Japanese and French and the Korean Officials, it is not at all unlikely that complications over property questions will arise and we may have to refer a number of questions to you for advice and help. I hope to talk over the situation with you in September but will write something of the situation now.

The situation is this:-

The Japanese are buying up property right and left in the city, and outside the city and particularly in the Maysung or old site of Kija's capital where the railroad is to run and where supposed-ly the railroad yards and station are to be, and where the new Western Palace (Korean) is.

The expectation is that a large city is to spring up there.

The Japanese have staked off their purchases (many of them) marking the stakes as defining Japanese property. The Railroad men have run the line for the road through growing crops and houses and on either side of it have marked off a large "Concession" of hundreds of acres containing the best land and best houses in the Province. Within this "Concession" (Chokyei they

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call it) the land and 400 houses are condemned and the people are forced out being ordered out by Japanese and Korean Officials and told to look to the Korean Government for pay. The people are being paid for their houses through the Korean Magistrate and although not treated impartially are on the whole paid a pretty fair compensation. I have not heard of anyone having been paid for land or crops but on the contrary apparently reliable reports say that within this concession the magistrate himself is buying up land at a cheap price and selling it to the Japanese, that the Dai Ichi Ginko men are buying up land and that the Japanese are ordering the people off the land and out of the houses.

The people are highly enraged - see no hope of redress, do not understand what is being done, cannot trust their own officials, are driven out of house and land and lose their crops. Ignorant and helpless they are the victims of their own officials and all kinds of sharpers, and when they appeal to the law for justice find the official apparently in league against them and growing rich off of their plight.

Within this concession was one of our chapels valued at about 1500 yang (150 yen) but not replaceable for less than 2000 yang. For this the church received 655 yang and the privilege of tearing down and removing the building - entailing a loss but not a sufficiently large one to make us think worth while to protest and claim more.

Outside of this "Concession" also the Japanese have bought hundreds of fields and the French have bought some. The latter with high handed measures forced the people who had houses on their purchase to tear them down under threats of exacting a high rent for the same. This produced intense indignation.

Possessing the loss of our chapel and the eventual building up of a large population where there are now fields and seeing some of the Christians and others practically forced to sell at sacrifice and knowing that we will need for our work sites for future use, Mr. Lee and I bought some fields outside of this

concession near to purchases made by Japanese and French. On one place which we bought the Japanese Commissary Department had created a stable in the early spring. It was not being used but the owner of the field could not farm it. We put up our stakes and soon after heard that the magistrate had issued an order forbidding the sale of any property to foreigners. He arrested the man who had sold to the French and it is reported had extorted money from him and ordered the transaction annulled but failed in the latter part because the Frenchman refused to return the deeds. He is said to have extorted money from some who sold to Japanese. He called in the man who sold to us, ordered him to annul the transaction and refused to give him but a small proportion of the amount of his loss from non-use of the field, as rent for the same from the Japanese who used it for stables and are paying the rent through Korean officials. The man declined to receive the amount offered as rent and so has received nothing but abuse from the official. The Japanese have doubtless paid fair compensation for the rent of the field but the magistrate gets most of it and the people bear the loss. Many fields were so used and some owners have taken the small amount offered having no redress and not getting enough to refuse. The Japanese removed the stables from our land about a month after our purchase of it.

When the man told us of the official's order to annul the sale we of course refused to give up the deeds and the matter was dropped.

Some days after this when I put up stakes on another field purchased some time ago, not far from the Western Palace and on which were several houses, the people, expecting treatment similar to that given by the Frenchman, went to the Palace officials and complained of the sale of the land to a foreigner. This official (*Li Liu Ho*) arrested and put in the stocks Chay Pongnin who had sold the field to Sun Oochun and Sun Oochun who sold it to me. Upon my representations Sun Oochun was temporarily released on bail. I telegraphed to you and in a few days the other man was released but only on condition that he will up my stakes.

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man was released but only on condition that he pull up my stakes, which he did accompanied by a policeman. I have replaced my stakes putting them in more securely. The people in the houses were again alarmed thinking they would be forced to tear down at once but learning that they would receive just treatment and not be subjected to the high handed treatment accorded by the Frenchman they quieted down and there is no further trouble. The instruction from the Foreign Office will doubtless prevent any more arrests.

Now another situation:-

Koreans under Japanese supervisors have made a wagon road towards Wiju which took in a part of a field belonging to Mr. Hunt back of the hill on which we live. Mr. Hunt asked the Japanese Consul where he should apply for compensation and received the reply: "This is an enterprising by Korean authority and those Japanese only manage that business under that authority so that I will like to inform you that I think you will be right to consult with the matter to Korean authority." He then applied to the Kaunt who replied that he would certainly receive compensation either from the Koreans or Japanese and that he need not worry the matter would be settled in due time.

I think there will be no difficulty over that matter.

Through this same field of Mr. Hunt's and through a field belonging to me in the Maysung (outside of the Japanese or railroad "Concession") the Railroad is to run and through my field the grading has been done. We have not yet applied for compensation for the loss of these fields. Before doing so we should like to know from you through whom we should apply and what is to govern in determining the amount of damages. The amount will not be large- less than 100 yen I think but if paid through the Korean magistrate, Paing, we shall probably have difficulty. This man, Paing, who caused us so much trouble here a year ago or two, is the most unjust and yet shrewd scoundrel I have ever had to deal with and is the most contemptuous of foreigners rights. Some months ago his underlings took my boat against my written

protest, returning it the next day. Shortly afterwards they took Mr. Hunt's boat and I went in word asking for its release and compensation for the seizure of my boat, saying that if he could not stop such lawless proceedings I should write the American Minister. Mr. Hunt's ^{boat} was released at once but no compensation given me for mine. I have not pressed this matter again.

This same magistrate, Paing, recently accompanied a Japanese military officer connected with the railroad to the house of Miss Kirkwood's teacher and tried to bully his father into selling the house to the Japanese. The house is situated on the river bank just outside of the "Concession". It is a valuable site which will be worth a great deal in a few years and the owner does not want to sell. The Japanese and the magistrate wrote out a deed and tried to force the man to sign it, but he refused and was roundly abused. Finally they wrote out another deed at a higher price (less than he was offered for it a year ago) took the deed unsigned; left a note for the amount and afterwards calling up the local supervisor put the money in his charge for the owner of the house.

Thus the magistrate is in league against his own people and they ^{know} not how to protect themselves.

The man who watches our cemetery (having a house near by) was ordered out of his house the other day by the Japanese at work on the railroad who threatened to make him pull down his house unless he gave it up for their use as an eating house while working on the road near by. No compensation is offered and the man can appeal to no one for protection or redress.

We hear of these cases affecting men who are in touch with us. There are hundreds such of which we do not hear.

Do not understand me as being antagonistic to the Japanese; far from it. I write you these things to give you information of a situation in which I am sure you are interested and which will help to keep you posted as to what is going on. It may be of more or less use to you in some way. Of course we are all pro-Korean

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all the time and wish there was some way to overcome the rank injustice to which the Koreans are subjected by their own officials and by some of the Japanese.

Incidentally if you ever have an opportunity to help to remove the magistrate Pa'ng from his position you will do the Korean people here a great service and make the situation here a more agreeable one to us.

Thanking you again for your kindness and with kind regards

Yours very sincerely

(Signed) Samuel A. Moffatt.